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Remarks

Claims 1 to 16 are in this application.

Reconsideration of the objection to the drawings is requested. Specifically, reference numeral 24 of Fig. 1 is referenced in the description at page 5, line 7.

Reconsideration of the rejection of the claims is requested.

Claim 1 has been rejected as being anticipated by Harrison.

Harrison is directed to a method for preparing animal food pellets. As described, mash is fed through a hopper 2 into a variable speed screw feeder 3. The mash is advanced in a plug-type flow caused by a seal member 4. The solid plug of mash is forced through a sealed area 5 into a chamber 15. (See column 4, lines 47 to 52). The chamber 15 is comprised of a conditioner 6 in which a paddle conveyor 17 is mounted. The paddle conveyor 17 is not further described.

Claim 1 is directed to a steam expander. There is no disclosure in Harrison that the mash passing through the conditioner 6 is expanded. Accordingly, Harrison is directed to a non-analogous structure to the structure of claim 1.

Further, claim 1 requires "at least one hopper for supplying expandable loose fill material". Harrison is void of any such teaching.

Still further, claim 1 requires "a paddle frame rotatably mounted in said chamber to rotate about a central axis". It is understood that the Examiner considers the paddle conveyor of Harrison to be a "a paddle frame". What is not understood is the Examiner's allegation that the central axis of this alleged "paddle frame" is going into and out of the page in Fig. 1. It is clear that the horizontal shaft shown in Fig. 1 rotates about a horizontal axis and has radially directed arms spaced longitudinally of the shaft.

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Claim 1 specifically requires the paddle frame to have "at least one scoop mounted on a periphery thereof and extending longitudinally thereof in spaced parallel relation to said central axis". Harrison is void of any such structure. No matter the interpretation of the structure that constitutes a "paddle frame" in Harrison, there is clearly no scoop mounted on a periphery of the alleged paddle frame (i.e. horizontal shaft and arms) and there is no scoop that extends longitudinally of the paddle frame in spaced parallel relation to the central axis. In this latter respect, it is noted that the Examiner considers reference character 17 to be referencing a "scoop". Clearly, such a "scoop" is not disposed in spaced parallel relation to the central axis of the shaft.

In view of the above, a rejection of claim 1 as being anticipated by Harrison is not warranted pursuant to the provisions of 35 USC 102.

Claims 2 to 4 and 9 to 12 depend from claim 1 and are believed to be allowable for similar reasons.

Claim 2 depends from claim 1 and further requires that the paddle frame have "a pair of said scoops disposed on diametrically opposite sides thereof". To the extent that the Examiner is reading the radial arms of the paddle conveyor 17 as a pair of scoops, it is clear that the alleged "paddle frame" may only be constituted by the rotatable shaft of Harrison. However, a rotatable shaft cannot constitute a paddle frame. Accordingly, a rejection of claim 2 is not warranted pursuant to the provisions of 35 USC 102.

Claim 3 requires that each scoop be of L-shape. There is a description in Harrison of the paddle conveyor 17. Further, as can be seen in Fig. 1, the radial arms that extend from the rotating shaft are shown as flat plates disposed at an angle. Accordingly, a rejection of claim 3 as being anticipated by Harrison is not warranted pursuant to the provisions of 35 USC 103.

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Note is made of the Examiner's comment that any one panel and the horizontal shaft constitute an L-shaped scoop. Issue is taken in this respect. Since claim 1 requires "a paddle frame" with "at least one scoop mounted on a periphery thereof". It cannot be seen how the one paddle and the horizontal shaft can be mounted on a periphery of a paddle frame. It is respectfully submitted that the tortuous interpretation of Harrison to meet the limitations of claim 1 is unwarranted.

Claim 4 has been rejected as being unpatentable over Harrison in view of Whiteman on the basis that it would be obvious to modify the flight radii of Harrison in the area under the hopper (2) in order to provide for a varied and/or more finely process of separating of the material coming out of the hopper being conveyed. However, it is respectfully submitted that such would not be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art. Specifically, Harrison is directed to a process in which the mash delivered into the hopper is to be advanced in a plug-type flow (column 4, line 47). Thus, no separation is to take place in Harrison. Instead, the mash is to be consolidated. For this reason alone, one of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated by Whiteman to modify the flight radii of Harrison in the area under the hopper (2). Accordingly, a rejection of claim 4 as being unpatentable over Harrison in view of Whiteman is not warranted pursuant to the provisions of 35 USC 103.

Claim 5 has been rejected as being unpatentable over Harrison in view of Trotter and Martin. Reconsideration of this rejection is requested.

Claim 5 contains recitations similar to claim 1 and is believed to be allowable for similar reasons. Further, the proposed modification of Harrison with a pair of hoppers and a pair of screws would not result in the structure recited in claim 5 for the reasons expressed above with respect to claim 1. Accordingly, a rejection of claim 5 as being

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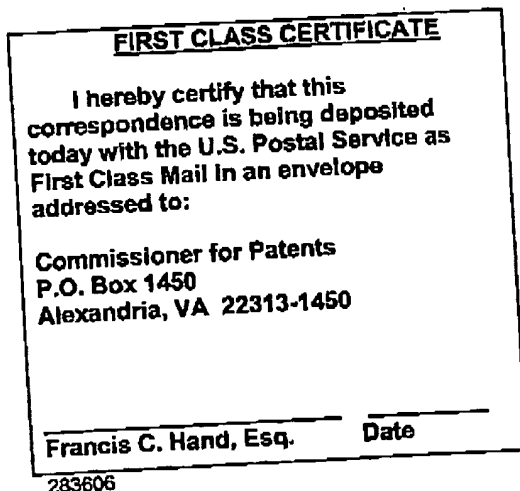
unpatentable over Harrison in view of Trotter and Martin is not warranted pursuant to the provisions of 35 USC 103.

Claims 6 to 8 and 13 to 16 depend from claim 5 and are believed to be allowable for similar reasons.

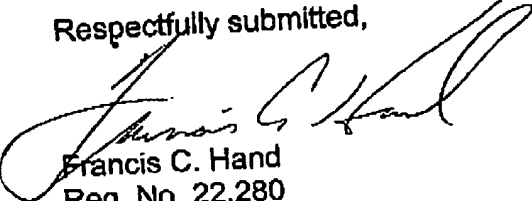
Note is made that claim 8 contains recitations similar to claim 4 and is believed to be allowable for similar reasons.

Claims 9 to 16 have been added to further define the paddle frame and the relationship between the elements of the paddle frame and the claimed scoop.

The application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such is respectfully requested.



Respectfully submitted,



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